

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 3, as follows:

In particularly preferred embodiments, member rebate monies accumulated in the various available funds and accounts of the Student Loan Payment Account 120 are disbursed directly by the Money Manager ~~400~~ 110 to the member's various higher education creditors. The present invention, however, is not limited by the nature of the member's higher education creditors. Indeed, the present invention contemplates, that the member may be indebted for higher educational expenses to banks and other financial institutions, commercial loan companies, various state and federal government lending agencies, and private organizations. In particular, the present invention contemplates that the higher educational expenses owed by members may comprise expenses for tuition and fees, room and board, and any other expenses incidental to obtaining a higher education. The present invention also contemplates that member rebate monies held in member Student Loan Payment Accounts 120 may be used by the member to pay down existing higher education loans and debts. Additionally, the present invention contemplates the use of member funds to pay-down the interest that is accumulating while student loan payments are deferred (*i.e.*, before graduation).

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 17, as follows:

In certain other embodiments, the various investment fund and account options 115 available to the member may include Educational IRAs 130. The present invention contemplates that available funds and accounts under the Educational IRAs 130 option may comprise interest bearing mutual funds, bond funds, index funds, money market accounts, or any other investment grade security or equity allowable by law. In preferred embodiments, the member Education IRAs 130 are managed by the professional Money Manager 110 ~~400~~. In particularly preferred embodiments, when the member Educational IRAs 130 are managed by a professional Money Manager ~~400~~ 110, the Money Manager 110 ~~400~~ will provide the member with appropriate guidance and oversight of each

member Educational IRAs 130 and additionally be to able provide all relevant accountings. In still other preferred embodiments, the Money Manager 110 ~~400~~ managing the member's rebate monies accumulated in the funds and accounts of the member's Educational IRAs 130, will make the necessary disbursements to higher educational institutions, and other higher education creditors of the member.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 30, and ending on page 13, line 17 as follows:

In still other embodiments, a member may elect from the various investment funds and account options available 115 to have the Money Manager 110 ~~400~~ direct their earned rebate monies into a Higher Education Savings Fund 140. The present invention contemplates that the monies directed into a member's Higher Education Savings Fund 140 may be held in a number of various funds and accounts. In some embodiments, the various investment fund and account options that may comprise a member Higher Education Savings Fund 140 include money market accounts, regular savings accounts, bond funds, stock index funds, mutual funds, annuities, and any other investment grade security or equity, as allowed by law. In preferred embodiments, the Money Manager 110 ~~400~~ manages and advises the member on investment strategies and opportunities available to the member for accumulating interest on their Higher Education Savings Accounts 140. In particularly preferred embodiments, the Money Manager 110 ~~400~~ may directly disburse monies regularly and periodically from the member's various funds and accounts comprising their Higher Education Savings Account 140 to the member's higher education creditors. As seen above, the present invention is not limited by the nature of the member's higher education creditors, nor by the nature of the member's debt to a particular higher education creditor. In still other embodiments, the monies accumulated in the funds and accounts of the member's Higher Education Savings Accounts 140 are allowed to accrete for a period of time until they are disbursed.

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Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 18, and ending on page 14, line 3 as follows:

In additional embodiments, a member may elect from the various investment funds and account options 115 to have the Money Manager 110 ~~400~~ direct their earned rebate monies into a Higher Education Charitable Donations Account 150. In some embodiments, the various funds and accounts that may comprise a member Higher Education Charitable Donations Account 150 include money market accounts, regular savings accounts, bond funds, stock index funds, mutual funds, annuities, and any other investment grade security or equity, as allowed by law. In a preferred embodiment, a professional Money Manger 110 ~~400~~ manages the monies directed into the various funds and accounts of a member's Higher Education Charitable Donations Account 150. In a particular embodiment, the member's earned rebate monies directed to the funds and accounts available under the Higher Education Charitable Donations Account 150 are held without commingling with those monies of other members held for like purposes. However, in other preferred embodiments, an individual member's earned rebate monies held in the various investment fund and account options under a Higher Education Charitable Donations Account 150 are aggregated with those of other member's electing to direct their earned rebate monies into Higher Education Charitable Donations Accounts 150.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 17, as follows:

In still other embodiments, a member may elect from the various investment funds and account options available 115 to have the Money Manager 110 ~~400~~ direct their earned rebate monies into a State 529 Savings Account 160. The present invention contemplates that the monies directed into a member's State 529 Savings Account 160 may be held in a number of various funds and accounts as allowed by law. In preferred embodiments, the professional Money Manager 110 ~~400~~ directly disburses the funds that are deposited into a member's State 529 Savings Account 160. In still other preferred embodiments, the Money Manager 110 ~~400~~ provides periodic investment advice and

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management services over the member's State 529 Savings Account 160 monies such that the accumulated monies accrete in value.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 29, and ending at page 22, line 10 as follows:

In preferred embodiments, a Tracking Entity 525 ~~530~~ monitors and compiles information about the transactions between Registered Members 500 and On-line Merchants 520. In preferred embodiments, the ~~The~~ Tracking Entity 525 ~~530~~ will periodically and regularly communicate this information to either TuitionFund.com or the TuitionFund.com Web Site 510. The present invention contemplates that ~~the~~ such information may include the date, transaction amount, the rebate due, or rebate percentage offered, and member account information, etc. The present invention also contemplates that the On-line Merchants 520 will remit directly to an account maintained by TuitionFund.com or another entity any rebate monies earned by Registered Members 500 from the sale of goods/services. The amount of the rebate monies awarded by the On-line Merchants 520 to Registered Members 500 may vary based on established formulas, sale incentives, or other calculations particular to the On-line merchants 520.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 23, line 2 as follows:

In preferred embodiments, the Tracking Entity 525 ~~530~~ provides relevant reports concerning Registered Member 500 transactions with On-line Merchants 520 to a Rebate Network Manager 530 ~~550~~. The content of such reports may include, but is not limited to, information concerning the date and time of particular transaction, Registered Member 500 identification, the particular On-line Merchant, the rebate monies due to the Registered member 500, the amount owed TuitionFund.com, and any other relevant information about the transaction.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 23, line 9, as follows:

In certain preferred embodiments, the Tracking Entity 525 ~~530~~ will periodically and regularly communicate information concerning member transactions to TuitionFund.com 510. The present invention further contemplates that the such information may include the date, transaction amount, the rebate due, or rebate percentage offered, and member account information, etc. Additionally, the Tracking Entity 525 ~~530~~ may communicate information to TuitionFund.com 510 concerning Registered Member 500 spending habits, for example, compiled information on the frequency of purchases, general of merchants visited, or other topical information obtained by the Tracking Entity 525 ~~530~~ from the various On-line Merchants 520. Alternatively, TuitionFund.com 510 may collect and order the various Registered Member 500 purchasing data and information communicated to it from the Tracking Entity 525 ~~530~~. The present invention further contemplates that member purchasing information may be gathered from an number of sources, including but not limited to, the various merchant rebate schemes disclosed, from an affiliated tracking entity/rebate network manager, or from third party consumer monitoring and market research organizations. In other preferred embodiments, and subject to TuitionFund's member terms and conditions and privacy policy, member purchasing information may solicit advertising interest from site and organizations not already registered or affiliated with TuitionFund.com. Additionally, subject to TuitionFund's member terms and conditions and privacy policy, TuitionFund.com may communicate information concerning the transactions between one or more Registered Members 500 and one or more On-line Merchants 520. For example, TuitionFund.com may communicate any pertinent information concerning the gross sales, unit volumes, and/or marketing and consumer research, of one or more On-line Merchants 520, or more particular information concerning one or more Registered Member's 500 spending purchases and the like.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 24, line 2, as follows:

The present invention contemplates that the Rebate Network Manager 530 ~~540~~ may use the information communicated to it by TuitionFund.com for any agreed upon

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business purposes. The Rebate Network Manager 530 ~~540~~ may likewise further tabulate and calculate any sums due or owing to either TuitionFund.com 510 or the Registered Member 500 from this information. In particularly preferred embodiments, the Rebate Network Manager 530 ~~540~~ may debit the debitible accounts established by the On-line Merchants 520 and transfer a particular earned rebate to the Money Manager 540 ~~550~~; alternatively, TuitionFund.com 510 may debit these debitible accounts and transfer the earned rebate to the Money Manager 540 ~~650~~. Additionally, the present invention contemplates that any Registered Member 500 rebate monies earned that are transferred may be transferred in the aggregate for a particular grouping of Registered Members 500, or particular grouping of Registered Member 500 transactions.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 24, line 13, as follows:

Thus, the present invention contemplates that any necessary information for awarding or allocating an earned sum to a particular member may be performed by the Rebate Network Manager 530 ~~540~~ based on the information communicated to it by On-line Merchant(s) 520, the Tracking Entity 525 ~~530~~, or TuitionFund.com 510. Alternatively, in yet other embodiments, the information may be attached to the ultimate transfer of member earned rebate monies to the Money Manager 540 ~~550~~ for disbursement and award to a particular Registered Member's Rebate Accounts 550 ~~560~~ (*See also*, Figure 1, at 115). In still further embodiments, TuitionFund.com 510 may transfer the rebate monies earned by Register Members 500 directly to the Money Manager 540 ~~650~~. In these particular embodiments, the present invention contemplates that the transfer of monies from TuitionFund.com 510 to the Money Manager 540 ~~550~~ may also entail and pertinent data for disbursing the monies. The present invention is not intended to be limited to any particular methodology for awarding and accrediting a particular member with his/her earned rebate monies.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 25, line 8, as follows:

In some preferred embodiments, the Rebate Network Manager ~~540~~ 530 may comprise service providers such as, but not limited to, InfoSpace.com. In other preferred embodiments, the Tracking Entity ~~525~~ 530 may comprise service providers, such as but not limited to, LinkShare.com, or Befree.com.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 25, line 14, and ending at page 26, line 5 as follows:

Figure 6 is a flow chart briefly illustrating yet another contemplated merchant rebate sales scheme. Registered Member (off-line) 600 may Select ~~605~~ 615 to visit a Point-of-Sale Merchant ~~640~~ 620 (i.e., at the merchant's place of business). In preferred embodiments, the Registered Member (off-line) 600 and the Point-of-Sale Merchant ~~620~~ 640 will consummate a sale of goods or services. In preferred embodiments, the Point-of-Sale Merchant ~~620~~ 640 is indirectly connected via a communications link to a Rebate Network Manager ~~640~~ 630. The present invention contemplates that the Point-of-Sale Merchant ~~620~~ 640 will be registered with the Rebate Network Manager ~~640~~ 630. In particularly preferred embodiments, the Rebate Network Manager ~~640~~ 630 calculates the rebate due the Registered Member 600 based on an existing formula, and then debits the account of the Point-of-Sale Merchant ~~620~~ 640 for the rebate awarded the Registered Member (off-line) 600. The present invention further contemplates that the Rebate Network Manager ~~640~~ 630 receives a small percentage of each consummated sale involving a Point-of-sale Merchant ~~620~~ 640, and also calculates a percent fee, from .001 – 30.00%, based on the sum of the particular transaction, as a payment to the TuitionFund.com Web Site ~~610~~ 640. The Rebate Network Manager ~~640~~ 630 disburses the rebate sum earned by a particular Registered Member 600 from each transaction with a Point-of-Sale Merchant ~~620~~ 640, to the professional Money Manager 650 for further disbursement into the Registered Member's 600 various investment Funds and Accounts 660 (See also Figure 1, at 115). In preferred embodiments, the Rebate Network Manager ~~640~~ 630 affiliate may comprise a service such as InfoSpace.com, or like service providers. Also, as stated above, in particular embodiments, the professional Money

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Managers 650 contemplated may comprise Charles Schwab, Fidelity, American Express, or Merrill Lynch, or similar financial services firms.